



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------

09/050,113 03/30/98 EMA

T 980446

<input type="checkbox"/>	MM42/1123	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	-----------	--------------------------

ARMSTRONG WESTERMAN HATTORI
MCLELAND & NAUGHTON
1725 K STREET NW
SUITE 1000
WASHINGTON DC 20006

EXAMINER

WARREN, M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2815	9

DATE MAILED:

11/23/99

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/050,113	Applicant(s)	Ema
	Examiner Matthew Warren	Group Art Unit 2815	

Responsive to communication(s) filed on Sep 2, 1999

This action is **FINAL**.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle* 1035 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), or thirty days, whichever is longer, from the mailing date of this communication. Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. (35 U.S.C. § 133). Extensions of time may be obtained under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Disposition of Claim

- Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- Claims _____ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

Application Papers

- See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
- The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.
- The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- All Some* None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been
- received.
 - received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) _____.
 - received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*Certified copies not received: _____

- Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- Notice of References Cited, PTO-892
- Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____
- Interview Summary, PTO-413
- Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

— SEE OFFICE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES —

Art Unit: 2815

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to the applicant's amendment filed on September 2, 1999.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 1 recites the limitation "the contact hole" in line 9. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 1-14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uehara et al. in view of Hiroshi.

Art Unit: 2815

Uehara et al. discloses a semiconductor device having a base (10), two conductor patters (50b), a protective etch stopper film covering the upper surface of the patters (18x), a first insulation film (32), a contact hole between the two conductor patterns (figure 6), sidewall insulation films (20a and 20b) and a plug buried in the contact hole (50a). Hiroshi discloses (abstract and figure) a semiconductor device in which an etch stop layer of silicon nitride (6) is formed on a gate electrode (5). A first insulating film is formed over the etch stop layer and a contact hole (9) is formed in the insulating film between two gate structures. The hole reaches the base substrate. A sidewall insulation film is formed on an inner wall of the insulation film, on the side of the gate conductor patterns, and on the side of the etch stopper film. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the semiconductor device of Uehara et al with the etch stop layer and sidewall films of Hiroshi to improve the electrical characteristics of the device.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Art Unit: 2815

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew Warren whose telephone number is (703)305-0760.

MEW
MEW
November 22, 1999

Mahshid Saadat
Mahshid Saadat
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800